

REMARKS

In the Office Action the Examiner noted that claims 1-10, 12-21 and 23 are pending in the application. The Examiner allowed claims 1, 3-10, 12, 13, 18-21 and 23, while rejecting claims 2 and 14-17. By this amendment, various claims have been amended. Thus, claims 1-10, 12-21 and 23 are pending in the application. The Examiner's rejections are traversed below.

Prior Art Rejections of Claims 2 and 14-17

In items 3-8 on page 2-3 of the Office Action the Examiner has withdrawn the previously indicated allowability of claims 2 and 14-17 and has rejected these claims as anticipated by either U.S. Patent 6,058,163 to Patterson et al. or U.S. Patent 6,263,049 to Kuhn.

The Prior Art

U.S. Patent 6,058,163 to Pattison et al. is directed to a method and system to permit monitoring of a call center agent or similar service representative in servicing calls in a call center using a variety of scheduling criteria (Abstract). A number of agent work stations are coupled to a switching device and receive customer calls from the switching device. A platform is coupled to the switching device to determine monitoring schedules for the service representatives. The monitoring schedules are based on monitoring periods having scheduling criteria. The platform determines for each service representative whether the scheduling criteria for an associated monitoring period is met, and records a customers call if the scheduling criteria of the associated monitoring period is met (column 2, lines 14-24).

U.S. Patent 6,263,049 to Kuhn is directed to a computer implemented method and apparatus for assisting supervisors of a call center (Abstract). The specification at column 5, line 55 to column 6, line 34 describes that a supervisor is permitted to set various monitoring schedule parameters for each agent and that two or more schedules may be associated with each agent. A description is also provided of how a supervisor can determine how the schedule should be arranged.

The Present Claimed Invention Patentably Distinguishes Over the Prior Art

Both the Kuhn and Pattison patents relate to optimizing the output of a recording “schedule”. That is, these patents relate to systems that schedule a period of time to monitor an agent and then use some information available during that period to determine the number (Kuhn) and type (Pattison) of calls to record for that agent during that period. In effect, Kuhn and Pattison describe using a set of rules to enforce for a particular agent within a small window of prescheduled time. These types of systems have fewer recording resources than agents, so that they time-share the resources in an effort to maximize and better control the output of the small slice of time afforded any agent.

Where the Kuhn and Pattison patents are directed to systems that focus on agent monitoring, the present claimed invention focuses on the contact center as a whole. Thus, the present invention is directed to providing the ability for the system to automatically adjust recording volumes and or targets (agents) based on what’s happening in the contact center environment. The system is self-adapting and scheduling is not a prerequisite. The system provides the ability for the recording system to collect information on demand that is related to specific conditions in the contact center based on the conditions themselves. An example may be to record a large volume of calls across all agents during a particularly noisy period (when background noise levels are high) in the contact center to determine if the general quality of customer service suffers as a result. The resulting volume of calls recorded allows for proper analysis before drawing a conclusion. The prior art does not provide the capability of automatically and dynamically modifying the recording schedules (number of recording slots assigned and agents scheduled) based on environmental factors. Further, the present invention is advantageous in that the contact center recording rules are not preordained or bound by a preordained schedule, but instead adapt to the environment as it changes, providing the data needed to analyze the root cause or effect of the changes. Thus, it is submitted that the present claimed invention patentably distinguishes over the prior art.

Referring specifically to claim 2 as amended, this claim is directed to a method for monitoring contact center activity which includes:

recording data associated with a plurality of communications with the contact center, wherein the recording is based on a first set of contact center recording rules which regulate at least one of recording volumes, types of calls recorded and agents selected for recording;

evaluating environmental data associated with the contact center against predetermined data; and

automatically and dynamically changing the first set of contact center recording rules based on the evaluation.

The prior art does not show the features of automatically and dynamically changing the recording rules as defined by the recording schedule based on the evaluation of environmental data. Therefore, it is submitted that claim 2 patentably distinguishes over the prior art.

Claim 14 is directed to a method for changing rules for the recording of communications data at a contact center which includes:

...the rules regulating at least one of recording volumes, types of calls recorded and agents selected for recording, said method comprising:

determining at least one environmental factor of a contact center;
and

automatically and dynamically changing the recording rules based on the determined environmental factor.

Therefore, it is submitted that claim 14 patentably distinguishes over the prior art which focuses on recording features targeted at particular agents instead of the contact center as a whole.

Claim 15 depends from claim 14 and includes all of the features of that claim plus additional features which are not taught or suggested by the prior art. Therefore, it is submitted that claim 15 patentably distinguishes over the prior art.

Claim 16 is directed to a computer readable medium encoded with software to change recording rules by:

determining at least one environmental factor of a contact center
and automatically and dynamically changing the recording rules based on the determined environmental factor, the recording rules regulating at least one of recording volumes, types of calls

recorded and agents selected for recording.

Therefore, it is submitted that claim 16 patentably distinguishes over the prior art.

Claim 17 is directed to a recording rules changing apparatus for the recording of communications data at a contact center which includes:

a decision unit determining at least one environmental factor of a contact center; and

a rules changer automatically and dynamically changing the recording rules based on the determined environmental factor, the recording rules regulating at least one of recording volumes, types of calls recorded and agents selected for recording.

Therefore, it is submitted that claim 17 patentably distinguishes over the prior art.

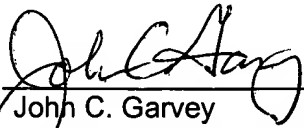
Summary

It is submitted that none of the references, either taken alone or in combination, teach the present claimed invention. Thus, claims 1-10, 12-21 and 23 are deemed to be in a condition suitable for allowance. Reconsideration of the claims and an early notice of allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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